



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 5a3
December 8, 2020

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TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

FROM: Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner *A. Infante*

RE: **Segue Institute for Learning - Proposal for an Expansion**

In accordance to R.I.G.L. §16-77.4-3, proposals for a new charter require the action of the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education. Further, when considering the overall merits of a proposed charter, R.I.G.L. § 16-77.3-3 requires the Council to place substantial weight on the fiscal impact on the city or town, programmatic impact on the sending school district, and the educational impact on the students in the sending district to ensure that the proposal is economically prudent for the city or town, and academically prudent for the proposed sending school district and for all students in the sending district.

RIDE, in partnership with the external evaluator SchoolWorks, has conducted an in-depth review of the proposed charter, including Segue Institute for Learning's (Segue) proposed academic model, public feedback, and the impact that the proposed charter would have on local communities. RIDE has concluded that the proposal submitted by Segue is both academically and economically prudent, and will result in high-quality academic opportunities for Rhode Island's students.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education moves to approve Segue Institute for Learning's proposal for an expansion to begin in school year 2021-2022.

Enclosed Documents:

The following documents provide further detail regarding the Commissioner's recommendation and analysis contributing to that recommendation:

- Commissioner's Recommendation Overview and a detailed overview of Segue's proposal
- Summary of the quality evaluation for the proposal
- Segue's Response to the Commissioner's recommendation
- RIDE's local impact analysis (educational, programmatic, and fiscal) for Central Falls
- Any local impact analyses submitted by the public pertaining to the proposal at hand



Segue Public Charter School

Commissioner's Recommendation & Proposal Overview

Commissioner's Recommendation: Approval

Summary of Proposal

| Proposed Charter Overview | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------|
| Charter Type: | Independent | Year Expanding: | 2021-22 |
| Location of School: | Central Falls | Grade Level (At-Scale): | K-8 |
| Enrolling Communities: | Central Falls | Total New Seats Requested: | 120 |

| School Mission & Model | |
|------------------------|--|
| School Mission: | "The mission of Segue is to foster a community where students take ownership of their education. Segue scholars receive a rigorous academic experience that prepares them to excel in the high school and eventual college setting of their choice. " |
| School Model: | Segue currently serves 240 students in grades 3-8, and proposes expanding to a full K-8 model. The expansion request is in response to 1) student and family demand for high quality seats in Central Falls; and 2) belief in the K-8 model as a school-wide improvement intervention. In addition to implementing a rigorous academic program for students, Segue also provides wraparound services to the Central Falls community. |

| Proposed Expansion Enrollment | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---------|------------------|
| Charter Year | School Year | Cohorts | Additional Seats |
| Year 1 | 2021-22 | K | 40 |
| Year 2 | 2022-23 | K-1 | 80 |
| Year 3 (At-Scale) | 2023-24 | K-2 | 120 |

| Overview of Public Comment | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Public Comment Period | September 29, 2020 to December 1, 2020 |
| Public Hearings | Two public hearings were held virtually via Zoom for Segue: 1) October 28, 2020; 2) November 9, 2020 |
| Summary of Received Public Comments | RIDE received 153 spoken and written comments during the public comment period. Of the 153 received public comments, 141 comments (92%) supported the proposal, 11 comments (7%) opposed the proposal, and 1 comment (1%) neither supported nor opposed. |



Segue Public Charter School

Commissioner's Recommendation & Proposal Overview

Commissioner's Recommendation: Approval

Overview of Commissioner's Recommendation

| Summary of Recommendation | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Recommended Action: | The Commissioner recommends that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education move to grant <u>approval</u> to Segue's proposal for expansion. |
| Key Recommendation Drivers: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As verified by SchoolWorks, an independent, nationally recognized reviewer, the Segue applicant group has provided a proposal that provides a clear justification for expansion and demonstrates strong potential to meet the needs of students in Central Falls. The applicant group describes how curriculum and culture will be expanded and/or adjusted to effectively serve the expansion grades. The applicant group provides quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrates a need in Central Falls for a school with a proven academic track record to serve younger students. Review of Segue's 2019 RICAS subgroup comparison performance data finds that economically-disadvantaged students at Segue outperformed the Statewide and comparison district averages (Central Falls) in English Language Arts. Segue students also outperformed the Statewide averages for multilingual students and differently-abled students. (Due to minimum reporting size requirements and/or because greater than 95% of students did not meet expectations, data for Central Falls was suppressed for these subgroups.) The applicant group demonstrates having consistent demand for the school, indicating that Segue receives an average of 150 enrollment applications for approximately 40 seats each year. The applicant group provides a multi-year financial plan that is practical and realistic. The application was rated "yes" on 100% of the application standards evaluated by SchoolWorks in the quality evaluation. <u>Family Demand</u>: For the 2020-21 school year, there were 888 applications received from students in grades K-8 residing in Central Falls. Only 169 seats were offered to these applicants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of all the Central Falls students in grades K-8 who applied to a charter school in 2020, 19% were offered a charter school seat. At-scale, Segue's enrollment represents 7.9% of students enrolled in Central Falls in 2020-21. According to March 2020 charter lottery data, 47% of the over 10,000 unique applications for charter school seats were applications from Providence families. |

Request for Proposals for New Student Seats: **Evaluator's Guide**

Office of Charter Schools

Rhode Island Department of Education

2020 Review of New Seat Proposals: Expansions

Comment Summary Sheet

Name of Charter Proposal: Segue Institute for Learning

Evaluator Name: Katie Rieser

Date Completed: November 20, 2020

| Summary of Comments | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Does this section meet the overall standard of quality? | NO | MOSTLY | YES |
| 1. Cover Sheet | | | |
| 2. Executive Summary | | | |
| 3. Mission Statement | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Proposed New Students and Enrollment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Goals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Community Need and Support | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Educational Program | | | |
| a. Track Record of Success | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Practices and Program Function | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. – i. Education Program Changes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Organizational Capacity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Operations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Finance and Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Variances | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Charter School Program Intent to Apply | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Appendix A: Required Attachments | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Overall Submission | NO | MOSTLY | YES |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the proposal adhere to all formatting and submission criteria, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-inch margins? 12-point font? A table of contents that references all sections of the narrative and all attachments? Page numbers on each page, including on attachments? 70 pages double-spaced, excluding attachments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| A. Is the request free of typographical and grammatical errors? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Are citations used for all references and/or excerpts? (Footnotes requested as a citation style) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Upon evaluating the quality of the submitted proposal, interview, and the performance tasks, SchoolWorks recommends that the Rhode Island Department of Education consider recommending for approval the proposal submitted by Segue Institute for Learning.

SchoolWorks acknowledges that the Commissioner's final recommendation to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education will consist of a review of SchoolWorks' ratings, feedback, and recommendation regarding the quality of the proposal, a review of public comment, and a review of a local impact analysis.

Essential Strengths of the proposal:

- The applicant provides a clear justification for an expansion to serve Kindergarten, first- and second-grade students based in quantitative data and qualitative (narrative) data. The application outlines a need in the community for a school with a strong academic track record to serve younger students; it also states that reaching students earlier in their educational careers will positively impact the school's academic and social-emotional impact on the community. The applicant describes the school's current progress toward its goals and reports demonstrated success in pursuit of meeting most of these. The applicant also outlines several goals that are explicitly tied to the expansion and are manageable and measurable. These goals include hiring new staff to serve students in grades K-2 and augmenting the school's current governance structure to accommodate the new grade levels.
- While the applicant names Central Falls as the sending district and outlines the needs of the district in the report's "Community Need and Support" section, the report does not further identify the subgroups in the Central Falls district that will be most effectively served by the school, either through citing demographic information or other student and family characteristics. In the interview, the applicant group was able to name specific aspects of the Central Falls community, such as student and family assets and needs.
- The applicant does not always clarify which cultural and curriculum changes are new and designed especially for students served in the expansion effort (i.e., K-2 students). For example, while the school outlines its current approach to disciplinary procedures, positive reinforcement, and restorative justice, it is not clear which aspects of this program have been shifted or added to accommodate younger students. In the interview, however, the applicant group described some changes that would be made to school curriculum and culture, such as an expanded use of phonemic awareness instruction, an emphasis on common core math at the youngest grades, and a simplifying of restorative and emotional language to developmentally serve the expansion grades.
- The applicant group has provided a multi-year financial plan that is practical and realistic. The application budget does not appear to underfund any areas that would preclude the applicant group from successfully implementing the operational plan presented. Based on the plan presented, the school would not be in jeopardy of becoming insolvent or suffer from liquidity issues if enrollment and revenue targets are hit.

Essential Concerns with the proposal:

- While the applicant group mentions a number of policies and practices that the school has used to accelerate student growth (e.g., the use of restorative practices across the school, a consistent curriculum, and a professional development protocol used to examine student work), the applicant group does not specify which policies and practices have led to the school's recent successes, such as the school's 3-star rating from the State. In the interview, the applicant group expanded on the use of many of these practices but did not explicitly connect specific policies and practices to academic success metrics.

By signing this Comment Cover Sheet, I hereby declare that I have reviewed and commented on the aforementioned request for charter school expansion, and that I have no known conflicts of interest with the individuals submitting the request.

Paige Gonzalez

Signature

11/20/2020

Date



Segue Institute for Learning

Where ALL Students are "AT PROMISE"

325 Cowden Street – Central Falls, RI – 02863

Phone – (401) 721-0964 * Fax – (401) 721-0984 * Website – SegueIFL.org

Angelo Garcia – Founder/Executive Director

Friday, December 4, 2020

Education Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green
RI Department of Education
255cWestminster Street
Providence RI 02903

Commissioner Infante-Green,

Please accept this letter as an expression of gratitude for your recommendation of our Kindergarten – Grade 2 expansion at the Segue Institute for Learning beginning in the fall of 2021.

We cannot say enough how excited we are to begin this work towards enrolling students earlier in their academic journeys.

It is no secret that Segue has been wanting this expansion for many years and we are more than ready to accept the challenges and celebrate the successes of serving our amazing scholars and their families in the years to come.

The recent report from SchoolWorks, including the capacity hearings with school and board leadership, reflects that we have met all the necessary criteria and are primed to begin this work.

Segue has always been a school that has made decisions based on what is in the best interest of students. Allowing us the opportunity to serve them sooner and for longer periods of time gives us the platform to further develop their minds both academically as well as socially and emotionally.

Our families are also very excited to know that their children will be part of a successful school community that has a proven track record of academic success all the while creating scholars that are good citizens of their broader community.

Segue's partnership with local social service providers and community-based organizations will

Equal Opportunity Employer

Segue Institute for Learning is committed to maintaining a work and learning environment free from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, pregnancy, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/civil union status, ancestry, place of birth, age, citizenship status, veteran status, political affiliation, genetic information or disability, as defined and required by state and federal laws. Additionally, we prohibit retaliation against individuals who oppose such discrimination and harassment or who participate in an equal opportunity investigation. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD)."

Cowden Street Collaborative, Inc. dba Segue Institute for Learning

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also grow stronger as a result of this expansion as we further develop our practice of being a "Full Service" community school.

As we embark on this transition, we will continue to be a partner with RIDE on any and all initiatives that will aid our teachers and staff the opportunities to become better educators and professionals.

The team at the Charter School office at RIDE has been and will continue to be a great resource for us as an independent charter school serving the neediest of students in the state of RI.

We are sure our school will become even more of a model of rigor and excellence that will serve as an exemplar for others to follow.

We cannot wait to see what this transition will look like in the coming months as we prepare for the first Kindergarten cohort of Segue Falcons in just a few months. As always, Segue will continue to share with RIDE all of our milestones along the way.

Again, and on behalf of the students, families and staff at Segue, we want to say "Thank You" to you and your team for your trust and confidence offered to take on this incredibly important work.

As you know, in Spanish we say "Si Se Puede!" which means "Yes We Can!" and is a term rooted in the struggle of working-class poor; especially Latinos.

Segue is very proud of the fact that we have worked very hard to get to this place after years of working to prove itself worthy.

Thank you again and we are confident you will continue to see and hear great things from us.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angelo Garcia", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Angelo Garcia, Founder/Executive Director
Segue Institute for Learning



Segue Institute For Learning

Local Impact Analysis for Charter Expansion Request

Local Community: Central Falls

Proposal Overview

| Proposed Charter Overview | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Charter Type: | Independent | Year First Opened: | 2009 |
| Location of School(s): | Central Falls | Currently Approved Grades and Seats: | Grades 3-8 240 Seats |
| Enrolling Communities: | Central Falls | Total New Seats Requested: | 120 |

| Summary of Proposal |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposes adding grades K-2 to its existing 3-8 model so that it serves grades K-8 at scale and can expand its reach Identifies the primary factors for the grade expansion as being: 1) student and family demand for high quality seats in Central Falls; and 2) belief in the K-8 model as a school-wide improvement intervention There is evidence of demand, as each year they receive an average of 150 applications for approximately 40 open seats |

| Current Approved Enrollment and Expansion Request | | | | |
|---|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Year | Current Grades | Total Approved Enrollment | Proposed Expansion Grades | Proposed Expansion Enrollment |
| 2021-22 | Grades 3-8 | 240 | K | 40 |
| 2022-23 | Grades 3-8 | 240 | K-1 | 80 |
| 2023-24 (at scale) | Grades 3-8 | 240 | K-2 | 120 |

Enrollment Assumptions & Comparisonⁱ

| Demographics of Enrolling Community | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| LEA | % Economically Disadvantaged | % Multi-Lingual Learners | % Differently-abled students | % Minority students |
| Segue | 88.6 | 15.3 | 11.4 | 95.4 |
| Central Falls | 95.0 | 48.0 | 20.8 | 85.7 |
| State | 47.7 | 10.7 | 15.7 | 44.8 |



Segue Institute For Learning

Local Impact Analysis for Charter Expansion Request

Local Community: Central Falls

| How does the charter's projected enrollment fit within the overall portfolio of Central Falls students? | |
|---|--------------------|
| Enrollment Category | Student Enrollment |
| Total # of students enrolled in Central Falls Public School District | 2,878 |
| At-scale enrollment as a % of Central Falls | 12.5% |
| Total # of students residing in Central Falls ⁱⁱ | 4,534 |
| At-scale enrollment as a % of total # of students residing in Central Falls | 7.9% |

Educational & Programmatic Impact Analysisⁱⁱⁱ

2019 RICAS Grades 3-8 Performance Comparison

| RICAS Results | English Language Arts (% Meets & Exceeds) | | | Mathematics (% Meets & Exceeds) | | |
|---------------|---|---------------|-------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| | Segue | Central Falls | State | Segue | Central Falls | State |
| Grade 3 | - | 25.5 | 47.9 | - | 13.9 | 36.1 |
| Grade 4 | - | 12.0 | 37.2 | - | 12.9 | 32.6 |
| Grade 5 | 12.2 | 13.0 | 39.1 | ** | 9.1 | 30.1 |
| Grade 6 | 10.0 | 11.6 | 39.1 | 10.0 | ** | 27.9 |
| Grade 7 | 23.7 | 6.5 | 31.5 | 11.8 | ** | 27.6 |
| Grade 8 | 40.8 | 5.6 | 36.3 | ** | ** | 24.5 |

2019 RICAS Subgroup Performance Comparison

| RICAS Results All Tested Grades Demographic Breakdown | English Language Arts (% Meets/Exceeds) | | | | Mathematics (% Meets/Exceeds) | | | |
|--|---|--------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | All | Econ Disadv. | Multi-Lingual | Differently-abled | All | Econ Disadv. | Multi-Lingual | Differently-abled |
| Segue | 24.9 | 24.5 | 15.4 | 6.2 | 7.3 | 6.5 | ** | ** |
| Central Falls | 12.6 | 12.6 | * | ** | 7.9 | 8.3 | * | ** |
| State | 36.5 | 22.5 | 7.9 | 6.1 | 29.8 | 15.7 | 6.3 | 5.0 |

| Student Demand Analysis for Grade K-8 Charter Seats ^{iv} | | |
|--|-------|---------------|
| | Segue | Central Falls |
| Number of 2020-21 Charter Applications by community for grades K-12: | 133 | 888 |
| Number of 2020-21 Charter Seats Offered by community for grades K-12: | 67 | 169 |
| What % of 2020-21 grades K-12 lottery applicants by community were offered a seat? | 50% | 19% |



Segue Institute For Learning Local Impact Analysis for Charter Expansion Request Local Community: Central Falls

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Educational funding dollars follow each child to the school of their choice. The following analysis projects the total amount of funding that would follow students to the school of their choice, commensurate with the size of the requested expansion.

| Central Falls Student Funding Projections | Projected Per-Pupil Funding |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Local Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Central Falls student ^v | \$3,388 per-pupil |
| State Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Central Falls student ^{vi} | \$13,550 per-pupil |
| Federal Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Central Falls student ^{vii} | \$2,762 per-pupil |
| Projected FY21 total per-pupil funding for each Central Falls Student (i.e. RIDE projects this amount of total local + state federal per-pupil funding for each Central Falls student in FY21) | \$19,700 per-pupil |
| Less: 7% withheld from the local share of per pupil funding for “fixed or unique” costs ^{viii} | \$237 per-pupil |
| Local Share – Projected FY21 per-pupil funding for each Central Falls student, less the 7% withheld for “fixed or unique” costs | \$3,151 per-pupil |
| Projected FY21 total per-pupil funding for each Central Falls Student (excluding funds withheld for “fixed or unique costs”) | \$19,463 per-pupil |

Total Pupil Funding Projections, Commensurate with Expansion Proposal: Central Falls

| Fiscal Year | Proposed Expansion Projected Enrollment | | Projected Total Local Share Pupil Funding commensurate with new charter proposal | Projected Total Local Share Per Pupil Funding as % of local FY19 Total Expenditures ^{ix} | Projected Total Pupil Funding (Local+State+ Federal) commensurate with new charter proposal | Projected Total Withholding for Fixed or Unique Costs (to district) |
|-----------------------|--|------------------|---|--|---|--|
| | Total | Central Falls | | | | |
| 2021-22 (Year 1) | 40 | 40 | \$126,040 | 0.24% | \$778,520 | \$9,480 |
| 2022-23 | 80 | 80 | \$252,080 | 0.47% | \$1,557,040 | \$18,960 |
| 2023-24 (at scale) | 120 | 120 | \$378,120 | 0.71% | \$2,335,560 | \$28,440 |

Key implication: RIDE projects on an annual basis by FY2023-24, commensurate with the new school proposal reaching full enrollment at-scale, total funding of \$2,335,560 to be generated by Central Falls students. \$378,120 of this \$2,335,560 will be contributed through local share funding. This \$378,120 represents 0.71% of Central Falls total reported FY19 expenditures.



Segue Institute For Learning Local Impact Analysis for Charter Expansion Request Local Community: Central Falls

ⁱ Enrollment Assumptions and Comparison based off 10/1/19 reported data publicly available through RIDE's FRED database.

ⁱⁱ Inclusive of independent and catholic schools as available through RIDE's FRED database.

ⁱⁱⁱ Academic Outcome data is based off published assessment results for 2019 available through the public Rhode Island Assessment Data Portal. *Data is suppressed to ensure confidentiality because the minimum reporting size requirement (10 students) is not met. **Data is suppressed to ensure confidentiality because greater than 95% of students did not meet expectations.

^{iv} Demand analysis is based on the most recent lottery data available through the RIDE Charter School Applicant Report. Reporting sizes of less than 10 are suppressed for student privacy.

^v Assumes constant Local per-pupil funding, net of a constant withholding for fixed or unique costs.

^{vi} Assumes constant state per-pupil funding.

^{vii} Federal funding assumed constant and based off district averages.

^{viii} Withholding for fixed or unique costs is the greater of either: 1) 7% of the per-pupil local share funding; or, 2) the per-pupil value of the districts' fixed or unique costs district's statutorily defined expenditure categories minus the average expenses incurred by all public schools of choice for those same categories of expenses. Assumed constant in projections.

^{ix} Total FY19 Central Falls Expenditures: \$53,083,735 (all expenditures based on most recent, audited UCOA data)